

21 April 1959

BRIEF FOR THE CIA CAREER COUNCIL (Presentation by Director of Personnel)

SUBJECT: Administrative Considerations in Connection with the  
Proposed Agreement with the CSC for the Movement of  
Personnel between CIA and the Civil Service System

1. In considering the various administrative aspects of an inter-agency agreement between the Civil Service Commission and the Central Intelligence Agency which would provide for the movement of CIA personnel into the competitive Civil Service system, only the most significant benefits are listed:

a. Any CIA employee can be considered for appointment at the discretion of an agency appointing officer for positions in the competitive Civil Service, on a non-competitive basis, in the same manner that employees already in the competitive service may be considered for transfer to such positions. CIA employees will be granted competitive status on a non-competitive basis. This equality of opportunity is now available only to CIA employees who already have status.

b. All types of position vacancies immediately become available for employment consideration. Under current requirements, non-status Agency employees must apply under "open" CSC examinations. Application processing and rating presently averages four months before a candidate's name is placed on a CSC register. However, it is almost impossible to predict the additional length of time it would require before a given candidate's name is certified to a Federal agency. Two basic considerations are involved: (1) The scarcity of qualified personnel in the labor market, an index to the activity of the register, and (2) the maintenance of the CSC register in an active status—many CSC registers have become dormant as a result of 10-point veterans (who may not always be the best qualified) blocking the registers due to various Federal agencies refusing to accept them for appointments (10-point veterans are given a 10% additional score added to their basic score, which places them near the top of the quality group that they are in.)

c. This agreement will cut down on the length of "lead time" required to out-place Agency personnel. Successful Federal out-placement is impeded by the problem of "closed" examinations. Persons not having competitive status cannot be considered for such vacancies, and these examinations may be closed for several years. For example, the Administrative and Executive Officer (EO-11) Examination was closed in 1953, and, as a consequence, no person who was not on that register (or already had competitive status) could be

considered for GS-13 through GS-15 Administrative and Executive Officer positions. This condition existed for 5½ years until September 1958 when the Federal Administrative and Management Examination was opened. On the intelligence specialist examination side, the military services have had numerous vacancies over the last several years for which some of our employees could have qualified. However, our employees were blocked by lack of status or availability on the register. The upshot of this situation was that Army Chief of Staff (G-2) opened a Military Intelligence Research Specialist Examination in February 1959 and has been flooded with hundreds of applications.

d. Under the new Federal Merit Promotion Program, additional employment opportunities are apparent in other Federal agencies, provided CIA employees could be covered by the proposed agreement. While a Federal agency may limit the areas of consideration for possible candidates for its vacancies, once it has found it must extend its areas of consideration because of lack of candidates, CSC regulations provide that "the agency must evaluate all qualified voluntary applicants." Out-Placement is currently seeking all available data on these position vacancies through personal liaison. (This information is not generally available except to interested employees of the agency concerned.) As a "pilot" case, Out-Placement had a top-flight Agency official file under one of these announcements, and he was offered the position over all candidates of that agency. Succinctly, the Federal Merit Promotion Program (established as of 1 January 1959) can provide more immediate transfer and promotion opportunities to Agency employees if an agreement with CSC is accomplished.

e. Federal agencies in the competitive service have control over 86% of the total number of Federal vacancies. The majority of Out-Placement candidates of this Agency were definitely interested in Federal employment opportunities and, if this is any indication, it is easy to surmise why AEC, TVA, Panama Canal Company, the White House, the Legislative and Judicial Branches all decided that it was advantageous to broaden the employment opportunities of their employees. This has been accomplished through CSC agreements, Executive Orders, and legislation.

f. CIA employment may be considered as being even more attractive if such an agreement would provide Federal-wide mobility.

2. Also for consideration are the Civil Service requirements which CIA must be prepared to meet. This would be the first time that the CSC would have assumed an evaluating role of the CIA Personnel Program, which may be considered the major deterrent to this proposal. However, the major CSC requirements are as follows:

a. CIA would have to indicate that it had a sound Personnel Program in operation. Evidence of this, according to CSC, would be the issuance of appropriate Agency regulations and operational compliance thereto.

b. CIA must give a reasonable amount of external publicity to its vacancies, in order to insure that there is present an element of open competition for CIA positions. There would be no requirement that wide publicity would have to be given; however, employment information should be available in those areas and institutions where it could be assumed that qualified applicants would be.

c. CIA has developed and is applying reasonable qualifications standards. (Currently, CIA qualifications standards are, in some cases, higher than the CSC standards.)

d. As the CIA is under the Veterans Preference Act of 1944, CIA must have a written policy on veterans' preference with respect to initial selection. The CSC would be interested in the internal application of this veterans' preference policy. (This would involve some modifications of the current administrative handling of applications and the certification of applicants to operating components for internal consideration.)

e. CIA must provide evidence that its Medical and Security requirements are applied uniformly and that political affiliations are not considered.

The CSC evaluates the total Personnel Program of the agency but does not expect any agency to conform 100% to the CSC's requirements, except with respect to veterans' preference. The CSC must be in a position to reach a sound conclusion that the Agency does have a sound merit system in operation. Based upon this, they will be in a position to sanction an interchange agreement which is, in effect, a certification that the CIA selection process is generally comparable to that of the CSC.